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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Third periodic report of States parties

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*

Introduction

1. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is an attempt to regulate relations among people on an equal footing and is based on the fundamental rights of man which should be equal for all. The rights of women, identified by the Convention, are precisely the rights which have been denied to women and continue to be challenged in a variety of ways, although they form a part of the fundamental rights of man. Basic human rights and thus those of women as well, like the right to life, to a family, to education, to employment, to health care, to a life without violence and others constitute normal human needs.

2. These rights were jeopardized even in peaceful times of development on various grounds—class, racial, sexual and other—and especially in times of historical turmoil and turning points that brought in their wake radical changes in the existing order.

3. As it presents this report, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is aware that the circumstances detailed herein were conditioned by the events occurring in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The current state of affairs causes concern and mandates further efforts to overcome this situation. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia wishes to point out in particular that against the backdrop

* For the initial report submitted by the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia see CEDAW/C/5/Add.18; for the second periodic report see CEDAW/C/13/Add.23. For the report submitted on an exceptional basis by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) see CEDAW/C/YUG/SP.1; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.254 and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/49/38), paras. 758-776.

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of sanctions, grave economic crisis, a war in the neighbourhood and a large number of refugees, it has nevertheless honoured to the maximum extent possible all the obligations it has undertaken by accepting the above Convention.

4. On the basis of the decision which the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) took at its twelfth session, held in 1993,[1] the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia submitted in 1993 its extraordinary report on the application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/YUG/SP.1). The report was reviewed by CEDAW at its thirteenth session, held in New York from 17 January to 4 February 1994.[2]

5. This report built on parts of two previous periodic reports of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia pertaining to the republics of Serbia and Montenegro, currently the member republics of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is for this reason that in preparing the extraordinary report account was taken of the need to meet the requests (concerns) which the Committee presented following the review of the second periodic report of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Having studied the extraordinary report, which also addressed violence against women in the course of war as well as the effects of Security Council sanctions on the socio-economic status of women in our country, the Committee expressed regret over the conditions of women and violence to which under those specific circumstances women had been exposed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. At the same time, the Committee urged solidarity among women and stated that the international community expected to see their increased activity with a view to halting the war, violence and, especially, assisting victimized women.

6. The extraordinary report elaborated in more detail the application of the Convention and pointed to the difficulties in its implementation, bearing in mind the specific situation in which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia found itself following the secession of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia republics and the deleterious impact of Security Council sanctions, particularly on children, women and senior citizens. As the third periodic report is linked to the extraordinary report, this means that the facts, assessments and data, as well as regulations and measures which the present report contains, constitute a novelty and a change relative to the situation and problems set out in the extraordinary report. For this reason, we shall address in detail here only those articles of the Convention in respect of which novelties and changes have been observed, while other articles will be addressed in passing only (articles 3, 5, 6, 9, 13 and 15).

7. In our lands, the overall lifestyle of the population is changing dramatically; the consequences thereof are very grave indeed and will be felt for many years to come. The most pronounced change is certainly related to refugees, a phenomenon which should be defined in overall social developments and for which solutions should be found. In the past years, efforts were invested in order to overcome and alleviate the impact of refugees and to identify partial and global solutions. By abandoning their homes, refugees abandon their homeland, their place of birth, friends and everything they held dear in their previous life. The loss of material goods is often attended by the worst calamity, which is irredeemable, such as the loss of life of family members or the next of kin. If the problem of refugees and the effects of the Security Council sanctions on the population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were defined as the two decisive factors characterizing the then socio-economic and social situation in the extraordinary report, then it is noteworthy that in the period covered by the present report (the second half of 1993 until the end of 1997), these two factors have occupied a key place, because the situation concerning refugees and the impact of sanctions and their effects has worsened.

8. In early August 1995, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia received the greatest wave of refugees since the war broke out in 1991. As a consequence of the operations of the Croatian army against the Serb people in Croatia, 189,000 persons fled the Knin Krajina and arrived in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, of which some 63,000 were men, 74,000 women and 52,000 children under 18 years of age. Women and children as two inseparable categories made up almost two thirds of the total number of these refugees. The fact that this time virtually within a week whole families abandoned their homes and land, unlike the situation in the previous four years when men (except the old and the sick) would remain while women and children went into exile, singles this exodus out from previous refugee waves.[3]

9. Up to August 1995 there were already some 500,000 refugees in Yugoslavia, whose status had been regulated and who had come from other war-torn areas (Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly Bosnian Krajina—Grahovo, Drvar, Petrovac, Sanski Most), of whom over 90 per cent were women and children; their total figure rose to some 700,000 following this new wave. It is noteworthy that following the termination of the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium and the " integration" of Eastern Slavonia, Sirmium and Baranja in the Republic of Croatia on 15 January 1998, another 50,000 refugees, mostly women and children, found refuge in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Despite the signed agreements (the Erdut Agreement) and the obligations of Croatia to comply with the decisions of the international community, the exodus of the Serb population from the Sirmium-Barnaja region has continued, owing to pressures they have been exposed to since this "integration".

10. The brunt of providing for refugees has fallen upon the State, the domestic economy and citizens. Refugee rights are exercised through the competent republican commissariats and ministries. Refugees are entitled to full health care, free education and social security (for mentally and physically handicapped persons), and women refugees—mothers with newborns—to maternity benefits like all unemployed mothers in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In view of the large number of refugees (especially relative to the total number of inhabitants of the country) and the limited resources of the receiving State, adequate assistance was expected from the international community. However, not only is the international humanitarian assistance slow and inadequate, but also will diminish according to certain sources, which is unacceptable from the humanitarian point of view because this type of assistance will continue to be required, especially for the most vulnerable refugee categories (children, senior citizens and disabled persons). In addition, as the largest number of refugees wish to stay on in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, we will also need the international community's assistance in locating resources for programmes supporting their permanent economic and social integration.

11. Women refugees find themselves in a particularly grave situation, in a completely changed social environment attended by permanent stress, fear of the future and separation from the family, especially when it comes to mixed marriages (one out of five marriages in the former Yugoslavia is mixed). The main objective is to survive, and if that is achieved, to improve the quality of life to the maximum possible extent under the circumstances. Against this backdrop, women are at risk in all their natural and social functions. Fully aware of the threat which the war and refugees pose to the mental and physical health of women and children, the expert team of the Mental Health Institute in Belgrade set up as early as 1991 a mobile group of experts for the protection of mental health, which regularly visits the places with the highest inflow and concentration of refugees. Particular attention is given to women refugees with small children, victimized

women and children, women and children whose family members have been killed or wounded, children born into mixed marriages and so on, and programmes are set up to help them. Forty such multidisciplinary expert teams have been operating in Yugoslavia.

12. According to the available data (census conducted from April to June 1996), there are some 500,000 refugees in the Republic of Serbia, of which 54.2 per cent are women and some 27 per cent are children under 18 years of age. Apart from extending particular care to women and children, as the most vulnerable categories of refugees, the Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia has also placed emphasis in its work on repatriation and permanent integration of refugees.

13. The return of refugees and expellees to their homes is, from the socio-economic point of view, the best way to settle this problem. A stronger impetus to this return was lent by the Agreement on the Normalization of Relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the negotiations that are under way between the Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia and the Office for Expelled Persons of the Republic of Croatia concerning the return of 30,000 persons. The Agreement on the return of 60,000 persons to the Republika Srpska is about to be signed as well. As no contacts have been established with the representatives of the Muslim-Croat Federation in practice, organized return to the area of the Muslim-Croat Federation is still unlikely.

14. If the conditions were created for their return (and the international community can play a primary role in this), namely, if the status of their property were regulated and their tenancy rights recognized by the newly formed States, refugees and expellees would show much keener interest in returning to their home, thus enabling a more complete settlement of problems of the most vulnerable category—women and children. Another vulnerable category includes elderly women without family whose only means of livelihood was their old-age pension and who only had a tenancy right in the newly formed States. If these two crucial issues were resolved, a large number of women from this category would opt in favour of return.

15. Since apart from repatriation, another form of permanent solution of the refugee issue is the support for refugees' local integration, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has developed a study containing the basic principles of support to their permanent integration in Serbia. According to plan, permanent integration of refugees would be achieved on the basis of construction of flats or communities, purchase of flats in what is known as incomplete investments and purchase of agricultural estates or available living space in depopulated areas. Account is taken here of the need to encourage by way of permanent integration of refugees the development of undeveloped and depopulated areas, to create labour resources and to secure deficient manpower where it is deemed necessary.

16. The situation of women in local integration has been accorded particular attention, primarily by giving preference, in allocating flats and jobs, to self-supporting mothers and multi-member families, which include elderly women as well.

17. The Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia received funds from the budget of the Government of Serbia for the purchase of flats and accommodated 2,670 refugees, most of whom fall into the most vulnerable categories (women, children, elderly), in 534 newly built flats.

18. In parallel to using the above funds from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, the Commissariat for Refugees has persistently urged foreign donors and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide funds to continue purchasing flats for the permanent accommodation of refugees. Foreign donors' funds have

been used to construct a community at Zitiste (near Banatsko Karadjordjevo) with 26 flats, a community is under construction for 40 families at Alibunar, for 22 families in Backa Topola and for 16 families in Nova Crnja, the nursing home in Mladenovac has been expanded, and works are under way for the expansion of the nursing homes at Becej and Jagodina, which will provide another 300 places for the accommodation of elderly persons, mostly women.

19. As part of a pilot programme for the construction of a community for the permanent accommodation of refugees, which is financed by UNHCR, at the end of 1997 and in early 1998 work was initiated or was about to be initiated for the construction of several refugee communities with a total of 158 flats.

20. Speaking about the care of women, or the refugee family as a whole, it is noteworthy that the length of their stay in collective centres or inappropriate private housing adversely affects women and children so that from the psycho-social point of view the prolongation of this state of affairs is alarming and untenable. It was, therefore, determined that for the permanent integration of refugees to be possible, a greater inflow of funds is required both from international humanitarian organizations and from donor countries on a bilateral basis. Of primary importance is the provision of assistance for the permanent integration of families residing at collective centres (some 13,000 families) and then of the neediest families in private accommodation (some 72,000 families), thus providing for the mother and for childcare in the territory of the Republic of Serbia in the most adequate manner.

21. According to the report of the Commissariat for Displaced Persons of the Government of the Republic of Montenegro (the term used in Montenegro is "displaced persons"), over 150,000 persons arrived in Montenegro in several huge waves and found themselves in a very grave situation and at the mercy of others. Currently, there are some 30,000 of them who have been in Montenegro for several years now. To be more precise, the 1996 census registered 28,338 displaced persons, of whom 14,276 were women, accounting for 50.38 per cent of the total number.

22. Some 9,000 women intend to stay in Montenegro and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, hoping to be able to build a normal life, while no more than 1,000 intend to return, mainly to Bosnia. Only some 50 women plan to return to Croatia, conditions permitting. These data are at variance with the peace agreements, but represent the planned commitments of displaced women. Namely, so far some 400 displaced persons have been repatriated, although repatriation plans included much higher figures. Close to 2,000 women have lived at collective centres for years and have sought to attain better living conditions in this manner. It is furthermore noteworthy that over 140 women are disabled, over 950 suffer from chronic diseases and over 1,500 in all age groups report different health problems. Among displaced women over 18 years of age, some 6,500 are married, which indicates how unfavourable the structure of the family is in the total number of displaced persons. Particular attention is, apart from women, also accorded to children. Thus, some 4,500 children, both boys and girls, attend elementary and secondary schools, close to 250 children have lost one parent, and 30 are without both parents. Around 250 children have reported health problems.

23. Women bear the brunt of the burden of these problems and difficulties and have to provide for the family, children and senior citizens in aggravated conditions.

24. Bearing in mind all the above, we can hardly accept the already mentioned announcements regarding the decline of international assistance to such a large number of refugees in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until the permanent settlement of their status—returning to their abandoned homes or staying in the Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia—in which the international community should assist. In settling the problems of refugees and displaced persons, equal attention should be paid to creating conditions (social, legal, material, cultural) for respecting the rights of women, not by paying lip service to these rights but by essentially changing the attitude to these concerns.

25. The extraordinary report of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia stated that sanctions exerted a destructive influence on people in all walks of life, and most of all on the country's economy.[4] The estimates of economic experts are that absent from the negative effect of sanctions, the fall in production in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia following the break-up of the market of the former Yugoslavia would have been no more than 20 per cent. However, in view of the high import dependence of the Yugoslav economy, the situation in this field remains alarming, although the gross domestic product, which in 1994 amounted to US$ 11 billion, registered some growth and amounted to $15.5 billion in 1996. The per capita gross national product, despite some growth relative to the previous years, amounted to $1,471 in 1996. Average monthly salaries are low (slightly over $100) so that around 35 per cent of the population is below the poverty line (in 1990 only 4 per cent of the population was poor) or around 3,300,000 people. Another 1,400,000 are near the poverty line. According to the same study, in case of international support (which presupposes the lifting of all sanctions in the first place) and complementary internal reforms, it will take four to five years for the per capita social product to grow to $1,700 or $1,900, and almost 10 years to reach $2,500 (the figure registered in 1991).

26. The lifting of sanctions had certain positive effects, but not to the extent that would lead to any significant improvement in the status and situation of children and women described in the report.

27. As a result, the real resources for financing public spending have dropped dramatically, so that the amount available for the financing of various benefits, including women's entitlements, has shrunk considerably. On the other side, the scope of social entitlements has remained unchanged (even new ones have been granted), but in real terms they are much lower, thus calling into question their quality and even the financing of many services.

28. Generally speaking, since 1990 not only has there not been any improvement in the social and particularly health indicators which characterized Yugoslavia in many previous years, but certain important indicators even worsened (for instance, general mortality and the mortality rate of infants and children under five years of age), primarily as a result of economic difficulties.

29. According to studies carried out in the countries in economic crisis or under economic sanctions, important changes in morbidity occur five years after the onset of a serious crisis, and changes in the mortality rate are seen after 10 years. This means that the impact of economic crisis and sanctions on the health status of the population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is yet to be felt.

30. In April 1994 work started on the development of a national plan of action for the protection and development of children in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia until the year 2000 (and beyond), whereby the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia became the first among the States in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to proceed to implement the tasks accepted at the World Summit for Children in 1990. Although it is primarily a plan of action for children, it essentially and largely relates to women and mothers.

31. The national plan of action, or to be more precise, the Yugoslav Plan of Action for Children by the Year 2000 (and beyond), was adopted in 1996. In addition to the Yugoslav Plan, the federal Government adopted, in December 1996, the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Children in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which points out that it is precisely the Yugoslav Plan that is the basic programme document which the federal Government would be governed by in its policy towards children and young people. The implementation of these documents, i.e., the gradual achievement of the set targets, is under way.

32. On the basis of the decision the federal Government took in July 1997, the preparation of the National Plan of Action for the Advancement of the Status of Women in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by the Year 2000 is under way, and it should define the basic guidelines, objectives and activities in the field of protection and advancement of the status of women.

Part one

Articles 1 and 2

33. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Constitutions of the member republics guarantee the equality of citizens according to gender, but women, regardless of their marital status, also enjoy special protection at work during pregnancy or while they are raising a child. Women's rights are regulated in detail by a large number of regulations. A high level of constitutional/legal protection of women has been achieved in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia relative to international standards laid down both by national legislation and by international conventions. Consequently, the main emphasis is placed on reducing the discrepancy between the normative and actual state of affairs with a view to advancing the status of women, while bearing in mind the role of women in creating and developing a family and recognizing their equality in socio-economic development.

34. In the past period, which was marked by a process of streamlining the federal administration, the affairs relating to human rights, including the rights of women, have been placed under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Justice. Instead of the federal Government's Council as an advisory body for the issues of women's socio-economic status, the set-up of which was announced in the extraordinary report, a federal government Commission for the Advancement of the Status of Women was established as a working body of the federal Government. Its task is to monitor the social and economic status of women in the country, put forward proposals for its promotion and point to the situation and phenomena that could significantly undermine and threaten the status of women and lead to their discrimination and isolation. At the same time, the task of the Commission is to monitor, review and harmonize the activities aimed at the achievement of United Nations objectives concerning the advancement of the status and role of women.

35. The Commission's budget does not for the time being allow any large-scale activities, but the Commission is determined to ask for larger funds on the basis of good-quality and meaningful work programmes.

36. The assessment made in the extraordinary report that the scope of violence has become more accessible to the general public only with the appearance of the SOS telephone line for victimized women and children in Belgrade still holds true. This

is also borne out by the fact that violence and rape in marriage remains outside the ambit of the laws and regulations in force.

37. In the past few years violence has become more widespread and dangerous, the economic status of women has worsened, and their possibility of leaving a violent husband has become less realistic. The scope of violence against women is illustrated by the fact that the SOS telephone line registers some 1,500 calls for help per annum on account of violence and 500 calls on account of sexual violence. Women's need for support has prompted the SOS telephone to expand the scope of its activities in Belgrade, including the SOS Field Service, the Shelter for Battered Women, the Autonomous Women's Centre against Sexual Violence, the Counselling Service for Victimized Women, the Centre for Girls, the Incest Trauma Centre, the Group for Women Refugees, the Group for Women in Prison, etc. Work has also been undertaken to establish the SOS telephone network throughout Yugoslavia.

38. The SOS Field Service is responsible for direct personal contacts with women who call the SOS telephone number. Women volunteers go on visits or accompany women to various institutions when they wish. Several dozens of field actions are undertaken every year.

39. The Shelter for Battered Women was established in the spring of 1994. There are usually 10 or so women and children who are the responsibility of SOS women volunteers. The point is to support women who have found shelter here in their self-organization in order to regain confidence and self-respect. The address of the shelter is kept secret in order to protect the work of the shelter and its protégées from further violence.

40. The Centre for Girls was opened in the winter of 1994. It is made up of a group of women volunteers who are engaged in a variety of activities: an SOS telephone line for girls, a counselling centre on children's and human rights, work with girls from refugee camps, discussion workshops for girls on topics like problems with parents, problems at school, relationships between girls and boys, creative workshops for girls, etc. The main objective of the Centre is to prevent violence in the family and any form of violence in other types of human relationships.

41. The Autonomous Women's Centre against Sexual Violence was established in December 1993 with the task of extending professional female support and confidence to women who have been subjected to sexual violence at war, in the home, in the street or at their place of work. Individual consultations are organized with women who have experienced this type of violence, and legal assistance, psychotherapeutic and psychiatric support, education of women working with women victims of male violence, etc., are provided. Women volunteers from the Centre take care of the victims of rape seeking to resolve their vital problems and mediate between them and certain institutions, their parents and the like.

42. The Counselling Centre for Victimized Women was set up in 1996, intended for all women who encounter violence in their marriage, the family or outside the family, its aim being to assist women in overcoming such situations. The Centre arranges direct, individual talks, free legal assistance, expert advice, information and psychological and emotional support for women.

43. The Incest Trauma Centre was established in 1994 and is made up of women volunteers trained in working with persons who have experienced sexual violence, especially of an incestuous nature. The Centre works both with sexually abused children and with adults who were sexually abused when they were children.

44. The Group for Women Refugees deals with the problem of refugees, seeking to resolve their vital and mental problems and to activate refugees as much as possible.

45. There are many other autonomous women's groups active in Belgrade and engaged in various activities in order to improve and promote the overall status of women, including, in particular, the Group for Support to Disabled Women, Children and Mothers of Disabled Persons.

46. In 1994 a project was under way involving work with 90 women from a prison in Pozarevac. Most women serving time in that prison had been victims of many years of abuse in the family and are in prison because they killed or attempted to kill their partner. The project includes monthly visits to and talks with these women. One of its objectives is to extend support and assistance to women upon their release and help them adjust to a new living situation.[5]

47. Towards the end of 1995 the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in cooperation with the Yugoslav Commission for Cooperation with UNICEF, completed a situation analysis entitled "Women and Children in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia", which was adopted by the Executive Board of UNICEF in January 1996. In addition to an overview of the general data on the economic situation, demographic policy and trends, the material also contains a detailed analysis of the status of women and children, their health care and educational opportunities and juvenile delinquency.

48. The serving of time by convicted women in the Republic of Serbia is regulated by the Law on the Enforcement of Punitive Sanctions, adopted in 1997, in which all the provisions of the Convention were incorporated. First, the reformatory prison for women was made a separate institution. It will have a woman at its head, and its security service will be made up exclusively of women. The enforcement of prison sentences will be adjusted to the maximum possible extent to the women's mental and physical characteristics (accommodation, visits, nutrition, assignments given to them, special health care).

49. The Republic of Montenegro in 1994 enacted the Law on the Enforcement of Punitive Sanctions, and on that basis appropriate by-laws were adopted relating to the establishment, internal organization and manner of work of jails. Convicted women from the Republic of Montenegro are now able to serve time in Montenegro at special female sections of the prison, rather than in the female prison in Pozarevac (Serbia). Furthermore, these regulations stipulate that security in the female section will be the responsibility exclusively of women. The adoption of the rules on the nutrition of convicts, the minimum caloric value of daily meals and the manner of testing food quality secures a specific daily calorie intake for both men and women. The rules stipulate that women in the maternity section, prior to and after delivery, are to be given food the type and quantity of which will be determined by a physician, and that convicted pregnant women, depending on the type of assignments they are given, and lactating mothers are provided with increased energy value in their daily food intake.

50. In the course of 1996, 2,969 women were convicted in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, or around 7 per cent of the total number of convicts.

51. In the Republic of Serbia, 2,840 women were convicted, or approximately 7.5 per cent of the total number of convicts, primarily for criminal offences against life and limb (466), against honour and reputation (452) and against private property (409).

52. As for the female perpetrators of criminal offences in the Republic of Montenegro, 129 women were convicted in 1996, or around 6 per cent of the total number of convicts. The largest number of women was found guilty of illegal trade (47), issuance of cheques

that bounced (27) and traffic violations (16). As for other criminal offences, the number of convicted women was negligible. Apart from that, most of the women were given suspended sentences or court reprimands only. In the period under review, 10 women were sentenced to imprisonment, but in two of these cases compulsory psychiatric treatment was mandated as well.

Article 3

53. The equality of citizens is proclaimed by the federal and the two republican Constitutions, and any violation of the equality of citizens on account of gender is subject to punishment under the provisions of the criminal law of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the criminal laws of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro.

Article 4

54. As mentioned in the extraordinary report, currently there is no need for the adoption of any special incentives by the State in order to secure equality among men and women, but it is necessary to continually monitor the maintenance of the achieved level of equality and its promotion. One of the indicators attesting to this is the increased number of women in certain important social professions (journalism, the judiciary and science) as well as in managerial jobs. In the field of pharmacy, women are dominant. Namely, of 2,023 employed pharmacists in health institutions, 1,831 are women. Of 4,060 dentists employed in health institutions, 2,297 are women. Among physicians, women are slightly more numerous than men; of 20,942 physicians employed by the health sector, 11,337 are women.[6]

55. Pre-school education and education at all levels is also one of the sectors where women predominate (accounting for around 70 per cent of employees), but as employees, not as principals. In contrast, however, in Montenegro a considerable number of women have been appointed directors of kindergartens and elementary and secondary schools, as well as education inspectors. They enjoy all the rights and have all the duties as men, and according to the opinion of the competent officials, have been performing their duties effectively.

56. In recent years there have been an increasing number of women among attorneys at law. They most often are involved in civil law (65 per cent), criminal law (15 per cent) and labour disputes (5 per cent). Other women attorneys take any job that comes their way. However, women are rare among well-known attorneys who are involved in large-scale transactions with foreign firms, the domestic enterprise sector, trade in real estate and the like, i.e., the transactions that are currently the most remunerative of all.

57. According to a study of the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research, only 35 per cent of women attorneys have declared themselves to be in favour of increasing engagement in cases of violence in the family, i.e., acting as counsel for the prosecution for women in cases of physical violence, rape, divorce suits, etc. They argue that their gender may have a counter-effect in the courtroom, that they are inadequately paid, that there is no particular reason why this should only be done by women and that female attorneys at law must act as counsel for any client regardless of their or the client's gender. A large number of female attorneys, according to this study, are willing to provide legal services to the SOS telephone line.

58. The number of women in the police force is still too small, especially with respect to jobs directly related to the problems of violence in the family. Even when they work in the

police force it is usually as administrative staff. Changes can be expected in the coming years, as in 1993 the police academy started work in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as an educational institution providing high police qualifications. The titles of Master of Science and Doctor of Science are available upon the completion of regular studies at the academy.

59. There is no discrimination as to gender among the applicants wishing to enter this institution of higher learning, because the right to apply is given to all Yugoslav citizens who fulfil the general entrance requirements laid down by law and special ones in terms of age, health status and psycho-physical characteristics necessary for the performance of police work. Quotas specify the number of male and female students. The textbook for the first year at this academy contains a statement that the police long ago ceased to be a male profession and that any prejudices vis-à-vis female colleagues must be dispensed with in accordance with the views of the society on equality between the sexes.

60. As for the participation of women in the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Law on Defence, adopted in 1994, lays down the following rights and duties of citizens regardless of their sex: military service, participation in civilian defence and protection, training for defending the country, work obligation and material obligation.

61. The Law on the Army of Yugoslavia, also adopted in 1994, stipulates the existence of a regular and a reserve corps of the army. Women are not subject to conscription, i.e., they are not required to do military service. However, as professionals under contract, they may work in the army of Yugoslavia. Women work in all parts of the army of Yugoslavia, even among high-ranking officers (colonels). The reserve corps of the army of Yugoslavia includes, among others, women—military conscripts. Women are free to enrol in military colleges and academies. However, in the past few years, there have been no female candidates.

62. On the other hand, women account for the majority of civilians working for the army of Yugoslavia. They include physicians, graduate engineers, lawyers, technical staff, computer analysts and the like.

Article 5

63. The applicable law and the policy of the country do not contain any provisions that would point to the inferiority or superiority of either sex. As under the Constitution all workplaces and offices are available to all citizens, women may find themselves filling any available vacancy. There are certain legal provisions which help to dispense with old prejudices and which enable a man to take a leave of absence to treat a sick child or to take maternity leave under precisely defined conditions.

Article 6

64. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has ratified a large number of conventions protecting human rights, especially those of women. The existing provisions of both the federal and the republican criminal laws stipulate that women shall be protected against any trade in women and against prostitution.

Part two

Article 7

65. According to the data on the latest federal and republican parliamentary elections, there are in the Federal Assembly 11 women out of a total of 178 deputies, 12 women out of 250 deputies in the National Assembly of Serbia and 4 women out of 78 deputies in the Assembly of Montenegro. Within certain parties, women have assumed more prominent positions (the Socialist Party of Serbia, the Democratic Party and the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro), and a woman is at the helm of the executive body—the directorate of the left-wing forces called the Yugoslav Left.

66. As for executive power, there are no women ministers in either the federal Government or the Government of the Republic of Montenegro. There are six women ministers in the Government of the Republic of Serbia (for health, culture, family, private entrepreneurship, local self-government and without portfolio).

67. The extraordinary report contains data on the rise in the number of women holding office in the judiciary, particularly in courts of law, and this trend has continued. Women account for half the total number of employees in judiciary agencies (courts of law, prosecutors' offices). The current situation in Montenegro is also indicative of an increase in the number of women in these offices. Namely, of the total of 232 judges of the regular courts in Montenegro, 70 are women, and of the total number of 47 magistrates in the district magistrates' courts, 26 are women. Of the total number of 72 prosecutors working in the field of prosecution in the Republic of Montenegro, i.e., with the State Prosecutor, higher and regular prosecutors, 32 are women.

68. Non-governmental organizations whose activists are women have worked intensively, particularly in the domain of humanitarian assistance for refugees, poor citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and wounded persons from the Republika Srpska and the Republika Srpska Krajina. In the period under review, the Association of Muslim Women of Sandzak (SUMEJA), from Novi Pazar, and the Women's Federation for Peace in the World were registered at the federal level.

69. An active role has also been played by the Yugoslav Women's Association, which organized, as a member of the Society for Inter-Balkan Cooperation of Women, the Third Congress of Balkan Women in Belgrade in 1994 on culture and education, and took part in the Fourth Congress of Balkan Women in Sofia in 1995 on women, business and tourism and the Fifth Congress of Balkan Women in Salonika in 1997 on rural women. As a non-governmental organization, the Yugoslav Women's Association took part, upon invitation, in the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

70. In 1994 and 1995 the Women's Division of the European Movement in Serbia, in cooperation with the competent federal minister, marked through the media 16 days of activism against violence against women.

Article 8

71. Since September 1992, the participation of Yugoslav delegations in various international gatherings has been dramatically limited or totally banned under relevant United Nations decisions.

72. Contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Convention, the official delegation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was denied the possibility to take part in the Fourth World Conference on Women, although the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

had duly communicated to the Secretary-General of the Conference the national report on the implementation of the Nairobi Strategies for the Advancement of the Status of Women by the Year 2000 (in view of the fact that the Yugoslav delegation was an active participant in the Third World Conference in Nairobi and other similar conferences), as its contribution to the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

73. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is of the opinion that such a decision was counter-productive and contrary to the spirit of tolerance and cooperation which Yugoslav women representatives have always urged in all international gatherings.

74. As has already been mentioned, the delegation of the Yugoslav Women's Association attended the Conference but had the status of an observer and no voting rights. Representatives of several other non-governmental organizations from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia took part in the forum of non-governmental organizations, so women from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were not totally excluded from this important gathering.

75. The Yugoslav delegation was further denied the right to take part in the meeting of member States of the Convention, although it is a full-fledged member of that Convention.

Article 9

76. Under the laws and regulations in force, women enjoy equal rights with men to acquire, change or regain their citizenship.

Part three

Article 10

77. The extraordinary report provides in detail the legal framework and the statistical data concerning both the education of female youth and the education of adult women. The main principles upon which the system of education is based are set out in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as well as the constitutions and laws on particular levels of education of the member republics, which are responsible for the area of education. Education is available to everyone under equal terms. Elementary education is compulsory and not subject to the payment of fees. Citizens do not pay any fees for regular education, which is financed from public revenues. There are no differences in the approach to education on account of gender; there are no segregated schools, and there are no differences on account of pupils' social background or schools' territorial affiliation; the same laws, curriculums and rules apply to schools in rural and in urban areas.

78. Under the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia the main principles in education are the following:

(a) All citizens have equal rights to education, both elementary and general, and certain forms of vocational education;

(b) Education should provide conditions for the overall development of personality and upbringing of young people in tune with their current needs;

(c) The contents of education should be promoted and brought up to date in accordance with the requirements of our present-day society, and production-related, technological and scientific achievements should be incorporated into education as well;

(d) Vocational education should be adjusted to the trends of social development and changes taking place in certain areas of work and sectors of production;

(e) Conditions should be provided to enable permanent education;

(f) The quality and efficiency of education should be upgraded.

79. These principles, the rights of citizens in education and the goals of education have been incorporated into the systemic laws of the Republic of Serbia on particular levels of eduction (the Law on Social Care of Children, the Law on Elementary Schools; the Law on Secondary Schools, the Law on Two-Year Post-Secondary Schools; the Law on the University, the Law on Pupils' and Students' Standards).

80. According to the Law on Elementary Schools, all citizens, regardless of gender, are provided with the following rights: the right to acquire eight years of compulsory and free education, the right to elementary education of adults, the right to elementary musical and ballet education, the right to remedial elementary education and the upbringing of children of citizens who are migrant workers and live abroad.

81. The Law on Secondary Education stipulates that all citizens (regardless of gender) shall have the right to regular secondary education in the duration of two, three and four years, the right to secondary eduction of regular pupils with special capacities and talented pupils, the right to regular secondary education in any of the minority languages and/or bilingual education, the right to parallel secondary education for pupils who accomplish outstanding achievements and the right to correctional work at the Pupils' Home. Essential for secondary education is the vocational and professional educational basis as well as an individual's creative capacity to innovate and upgrade his or her knowledge.

82. The system of scholarships for pupils and students is regulated by a separate law and is applied to the entire population of young people—male and female. One of the main criteria for the award of scholarships is a pupil's or student's material status. There are also special scholarships for talented and gifted students, the primary criterion being talent and academic achievement.

83. The Constitution and the relevant laws stipulate that elementary education shall be compulsory for all children of school age and therefore the coverage of children by elementary education has attained optimum limits. However, owing to demographic, social and other factors, girls tend to drop out of school in higher grades. This phenomenon has been noticed in rural areas in the fifth, seventh and eighth grades. The reasons they drop out of school, according to research conducted by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, include long distance between home and school, the departure of parents with their children for a foreign country, poor achievement at school, family poverty and the lack of interest on the part of parents in the further education of their children. Pupils who turn 15 and fail to complete elementary school receive elementary schooling at adult education centres.

84. According to the data from the school year 1996/97, of a total of 859,843 pupils in elementary schools in Serbia, girls accounted for 399,825, or 46.5 per cent. In that school year there were 103,178 pupils in grade eight of which girls accounted for 50,597, or 49 per cent. Of the total of 325,410 pupils in secondary schools in Serbia in the school year 1995/96, there were 165,226 girls, or some 51 per cent. Indicators are similar in the area of higher education, where girls account for a slightly higher percentage. Of 98,607 students who enrolled in colleges in the school year 1994/95, girls accounted for 52,167, or 52.9 per cent.

85. According to the data for 1995/96 in the Republic of Montenegro, of a total of 80,290 pupils in elementary schools, girls accounted for 39,092, or some 49.9 per cent. A similar percentage of girls was registered in secondary schools—of a total of 26,936 pupils there were 13,723 girls, or 50.3 per cent.

86. As has already been mentioned, the coverage of children by elementary and secondary education in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is good. In 1993/94 some 97 per cent of children were covered by elementary education in Montenegro. As for girls, the indicator is 96.67 per cent. The coverage in central Serbia was slightly lower (some 96 per cent total and 95 per cent for girls). The greatest coverage was registered in Vojvodina and amounts to 102 per cent for all children (meaning that even children younger than seven years of age enter elementary schools), and 99 per cent for girls. The value of these indicators does not reflect the overall situation because they do not include Albanian children in Kosova and Metohija.

87. The coverage by secondary education is the greatest in Vojvodina (73.52 per cent total, or 75 per cent for girls). It is slightly lower in central Serbia and Montenegro, amounting to 71 per cent, or 68 per cent overall (73 per cent, or 67 per cent for girls). By the way, in the school year 1993/94, secondary school was attended by around 53 per cent of the population aged 15-19 years, but the percentage of the female population was higher, amounting to 55 per cent.

88. As for the continuation of education upon completion of secondary school in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, there has been a certain increase in both the total number of enrolled students and of women who continue their education. In the school year 1996/97, a total of 170,563 students enrolled, of which 91,798 (54 per cent) were women. The share of women in the number of graduates is also somewhat higher than 50 per cent: of 17,400 students who graduated in 1996 from any of the faculties or two-year post-secondary schools, 9,782 were women. At certain faculties the share of women who complete their studies by far exceeds 50 per cent; for instance, 69.2 per cent do so at faculties for sciences and mathematics, 65.7 per cent at faculties of economics and 57.6 per cent at law faculties. At certain faculties, the percentage of female graduates is significantly lower, e.g., at faculties of mechanical engineering they account for 20.5 per cent, and at faculties of electrical engineering they account for 27.6 per cent.

89. As the data on illiteracy are obtained in the population censuses, the latest illiteracy figure, dating back to 1991, was included in the extraordinary report.

90. The Centre for Female Studies, which was referred to under articles 1 and 2, item 4, of the extraordinary report, has continued its work. In addition to lectures (four times a week), group work and open days are organized. They address topics in the fields of sociology, philosophy, literature, law, anthropology, victimization of women, psychology, archaeology, linguistics, film and visual arts. The objective is to emancipate women and raise their awareness. Emphasis is on feminist criticism. Students include girls and women with completed secondary education of different professional qualifications. Studies are advertised in the press, and upon the completion of courses, students obtain a certificate recognized by appropriate female studies programmes elsewhere in the world. A small increase in the number of students has been registered.

91. In the school year 1995/96, a Chair for Sexuality and Society was located in the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. The Chair offers optional courses, which may be attended by all students of this Faculty.

Article 11, item 1

92. In the field of labour and employment of women there have been no relevant changes relative to the extraordinary report which would pertain to the adoption of legal or other measures, although the assessment given in the extraordinary report that women in Yugoslavia bear the brunt of the burden in this field and suffer the dramatic consequences of the crisis and sanctions still holds true. Due to the fall in household income in real terms, women are forced to do household chores on their own again. Many women in addition accept work on the side or perform some activity in the gray market. The crisis has led to an abrupt deterioration in the quality of women's life, although there has been an increase in the share of women in the total number of female employees in the social sector,[7] from 37.9 per cent in 1988 to 40.6 per cent in 1993.[8] The level of women's qualifications in percentage points has improved as well, and the highest increase has been registered with respect to women Masters of Science (from 28.6 per cent in 1988 to 38 per cent in 1993). The growing trend of women employed in research institutions has continued, rising from 34.7 per cent in 1993 (relative to 32 per cent in 1990, 32.8 per cent in 1991, 34.1 per cent in 1992) to 36 per cent in 1994.

93. However, notwithstanding full legal equality and the increased share of women in the total number of employees and the improved level of their qualifications, the number of unemployed women has increased as well, since they find it more difficult to land a job and figure more often on the lists of redundant labour. Thus in 1997, registered unemployment in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia rose to 17.9 per cent of the total labour force, but the rate is much lower among men (13.4 per cent) than among women (24.3 per cent), i.e., it is higher by only 1.4 percentage points for men relative to 1990 and by as much as 4.9 percentage points for women. In November 1997 women made up 56.7 per cent of all unemployed. Of the total number of women looking for a job, 58.1 per cent are below 30 years of age, which indicates that unemployment affects the younger population more strongly, a typical feature of overall unemployment in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Women looking for jobs are as a rule secondary school graduates (33.9 per cent) or unqualified (35 per cent). Most women have been waiting for a job between one and five years (48.6 per cent), meaning that the length of time spent waiting for a job has increased as well (from three to five years). All this, as mentioned in the extraordinary report, adversely affects the overall psychological and socio-economic status of women and makes them decide to give birth later in life. This fact can for its part adversely affect the health and the psycho-physical development of children. This situation is directly affected by factors caused by the deteriorated general economic and social conditions and further exacerbated by the sanctions which the international community has imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is believed that with the improvement in the overall economic situation and economic growth, unemployment of women will decrease.

Article 11, items 2 and 3

94. In 1997 a special Ministry for Care of the Family was set up in the Republic of Serbia, and this novelty speaks about the importance attached to the care of the family and thus to women and children as well. The Ministry is to cover a wide spectrum of activities in the field of protection and advancement of the status of the family as the basic cell of our society.

95. In the field of social care of children, in 1996 the Republic of Serbia amended the Law on Social Care of Children in order to improve the status of families with children, i.e., women with children. Under these amendments, the method of compensation of women on maternity leave was changed so that the calculation and payment of

compensation is effected by the employer at the same time as other salaries are calculated and paid. This is done out of the funds set aside for payroll tax, which the employer is required to pay. In this manner employed mothers enjoy absolute priority in the payment of compensation for salaries and their status is not changed during their maternity leave either in terms of its amount or in terms of its pace. In this regard, they enjoy equal status to that which they would enjoy if they were at work.

96. A maternity allowance, previously pecuniary aid to unemployed new mothers in municipalities with a negative population growth rate, has been transformed into a universal measure applied to all families for the first three children and, in municipalities with a negative population growth rate, for the fourth child as well. In addition, the amount of the maternity allowance has been increased from 20 per cent to 30 per cent of an average wage per employee in the Republic's economy.

97. A new right of childcare introduced into the system in the Republic of Serbia in the reporting period is the right to a lump-sum layette benefit. This benefit is being paid for the first three children and, in municipalities with a negative population growth rate, for the fourth child as well. The amount of this benefit equals the average wage in the Republic's economy.

98. As regards the exercise of the right to a child allowance, the conditions for acquiring this right have been changed, as has the amount of the allowance. This right can now be exercised if the family income in the past three months of the previous year did not exceed 50 per cent of the average wage per employee in the economy of the municipality where the family resides. Regardless of the material status of a family, the third child in a family with three children is entitled to a child allowance and, in municipalities (communities) with a negative population growth rate, every subsequent child as well. Handicapped children also have the right to a child allowance, irrespective of their material status. For orphans and children in one-parent families, the eligibility criterion in terms of an income limit has been increased by 20 per cent.

99. The allowance for the first child amounts to 20 per cent, for the second to 25 per cent and for the third to 30 per cent of an average wage in the Republic's economy. For orphans and children in one-parent families the allowances are increased by 30 per cent.

100. The share of budgetary (municipality) funds in financing the stay of children in kindergartens (all-day and half-day) has been increased to 80 per cent of the economically reasonable price of the stay, on average, per child.

101. The number of hours of educational work from the year before a child's enrolment in school has been increased from 240 to 630 hours (it is an average of three hours a day over a school year). This programme is being financed out of the Republic's budget.

102. However, owing to the lack of funds in the budget of the Republic of Serbia, there are enormous difficulties in providing for the above-mentioned rights, manifested in the impossibility of harmonizing nominal amounts with wage increases and in considerable delays in payments.

103. The work on a new law on marriage and family relations, which is to specify also the conditions with regard to the obligation of supporting the child, is under way, geared to improving the position of a mother since, in the majority of cases, she is the one who is entrusted with the care and support of a child during the course of divorce proceedings.

104. Legislative activity in the Republic of Montenegro and the adoption of laws and various by-laws have ensured the consequent and full protection of the disabled, children and women, commensurate with the material ability of the Republic to do so. The

fundamental constitutional principle of equality of citizens before the law regardless of their personal characteristics has been fully observed.

105. In various areas of social life the right of women to work has been secured as well as rights stemming from employment (annual leave, various other types of leave, etc.), the right to health care and related rights, the right to a maternity allowance during maternity leave, the right to work half-time, the right to advanced training, the right to disability benefits, the right to special protection at work, the right to a pension, the right to material and social insurance, the right to be admitted to an appropriate institution or accommodated in an appropriate family, the right to discounts on the prices of local transportation, etc.

106. In 1993 and 1995, Montenegro amended its law on social security and childcare, which provided for the special care of women on maternity leave and during pregnancy, the protection of mothers with children under one year of age, the protection of unemployed new mothers and full-time students who have been registered in a labour bureau through the period of their maternity leave, etc. They are entitled to the right to social security and childcare as persons unable to work.

107. That law envisages the right of employed new mothers to a maternity allowance during their maternity leave equal to the wages they would be paid were they at work. The amount of this allowance depends on the length of maternity leave in each particular case. The allowance is paid for the first 12 months for the first pregnancy and delivery, 18 months for the second pregnancy and delivery, 24 months for the third pregnancy and delivery and 12 months for every subsequent pregnancy and delivery. An employed woman who gives birth to twins is entitled to 18 months of maternity leave, and in case of three or more children born at the same time she is entitled to maternity leave, inclusive of prenatal care and delivery, of 24 months. Unemployed mothers (registered in a labour bureau) are entitled to a maternity allowance amounting to 50 per cent of the minimum wage set for beneficiaries of the public revenues.

108. Thus provisions envisaged and conceived in the law indicate that women, pregnant women and new mothers enjoy special protection, as well as the aspiration of legislative authorities to improve the status of women through continuous measures in the field of social security and childcare.

109. Likewise, in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, welfare centres (in municipalities) warn the competent authorities, based on their information or ex officio, of specific situations and possible negative consequences for the mother, child and society, and offer counselling and other services in the field of social care as a form of prevention.

Article 12

110. The protection and promotion of the health and health care of women have been organized as a comprehensive social activity, within which women are provided the same conditions in the whole territory of Yugoslavia, irrespective of their material status, religious or national affiliation and the place of residence.

111. During pregnancy, delivery and motherhood, as well as with regard to family planning, women, as a population group which is exposed to increased risks of falling ill and dying owing to their reproductive function, are provided with the highest level of health care in line with regulations passed both before 1993 and after that period, to date. According to data for 1996, there are 2,616,395 persons, or 24.6 per cent of the total

country's population, in the population group consisting of women of childbearing age (in the 15-49 age bracket).

112. Women, together with children, are a priority population category and as such are covered by appropriate regulations in the field of health care as a category exposed to increased risks of falling ill (in view of the problems related to family planning and pregnancy, delivery and motherhood) and that needs health care so that the most frequent diseases of a social and medical bearing can be prevented, controlled, diagnosed early and treated. The principle that women, as a priority category, should be accorded special treatment has been preserved in all laws and regulations adopted since 1993 to date, namely in the decree on the coverage and content of health care; the decision on the priorities, content and scope of health care in the period of the implementation of the sanctions of international organizations; the law on the procedure regarding abortions in health-care institutions of 1995; the strategy to ensure health care of women; and the decree on health care of women, children, schoolchildren and students, which was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in November 1995.

113. All those regulations and enactments envisage that, under the conditions of the economic blockade imposed by the international community, which resulted in a multiple decline in social product and living standard of the population as well as numerous difficulties in providing health-care services, priority in securing and using those services should be given to the accommodation of conditions upon which the biological survival of the people depends. In this connection, the absolute priority in providing health care is envisaged for women during pregnancy, delivery and a year after delivery.

114. In 1995 and 1996, a whole range of activities were initiated at the national level aimed at preparing important documents and translating them into realistic development programmes that define a national mother and child health-care policy, based on positive international experiences and contemporary recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF. The previously mentioned National Plan of Action for the Advancement of the Status of Women by the Year 2000 is under preparation and should be adopted in the course of 1998.

115. The previously mentioned Yugoslav Plan of Action for Children by the Year 2000 (and beyond), adopted in 1996, has defined priorities, targets and directions of activities in six areas: health, nutrition and growth, education, access to safe drinking water and sanitary facilities, child social care system and children with specific needs.

116. Although it was designed for children, the Yugoslav Plan of Action for Children has also set out important activities in the field of health care of women, among which are:

- Reducing the mortality rate among mothers to below 13;
- Increasing the coverage of women of childbearing age, reducing the number of abortions and helping women to give birth to healthy and wanted children;
- Implementing the Yugoslav programme of support to breastfeeding and the protection of motherhood.

117. The implementation of the Yugoslav programme of support to breastfeeding, organized by the Federal Institute for the Protection and Promotion of Health and with financial and professional assistance of the UNICEF office in Belgrade, can serve as an example for other preventive programmes that aim at raising the level of health care of the population, in particular parents and above all mothers with small children. Within the framework of the national programme of protection and promotion of breastfeeding, seminars to educate educators have been organized and in thee years of intensive

implementation, some 4,000 health-care workers have been familiarized with the new doctrine. Sixty-three per cent of deliveries take place in 50 health-care institutions (out of a total of 80 with maternity wards in Serbia and Montenegro), which implement the practice of keeping mothers and babies together from the time of birth. Fifteen of these institutions have been granted the WHO/UNICEF Baby Friendly Hospital international award.

118. The fact that the mortality rate of babies dying from diseases directly related to their diet has been reduced in the communities with an increased breastfeeding rate is of special importance. More than 250,000 pregnant women and mothers have been provided with adequate information and aid concerning their pregnancy, motherhood, diet and care of children, which have built up their self-confidence and feeling of security with regard to their role and importance in raising children.

119. Since family planning has been established as a constitutional right of women to freely decide on giving birth to a baby, the law on abortions in health-care institutions governs the conditions and procedures of the abortion as a surgical operation in health-care institutions, without restricting the woman's right to freely decide about having children, except in cases where an abortion would constitute a serious health risk or a danger to her life.

120. It should be pointed out that in exercising the right to health care, especially during pregnancy, delivery and a year after delivery, women with the status of refugees or expellees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are fully equal to insured persons from the Republic of Serbia, and the funds for this purpose are secured from budgetary revenues, this being regulated by the decree on care of refugees.

121. Nevertheless, in spite of all the above, there is a gap between the proclaimed rights to health care and the material ability to ensure them. Health insurance cannot cover all costs which those rights incur. Over the past years, international humanitarian aid intended to provide health services to the population has been reduced. Furthermore, data showing that the share of public expenditures on health care in the period mentioned amounted to 9.7 per cent of the national income in 1994 and 5.8 per cent in 1995, and expenditure for public health care in the years mentioned totalled $153 per capita in 1994 and $70 per capita in 1995, which by far exceeds the economic capabilities of the country despite the reduction. These figures indicate that this will have consequences for the overall health of the population in the coming period.

122. According to data on population trends in the Republic of Serbia in 1994, the rate of live births was 13.0, of stillbirths 10.2, of population growth 2.8 and of infant mortality 18.6; in 1995, the rate of live births was 13.2, of stillbirths 10.4, of population growth 2.9 and of infant mortality 17.2; in 1996, the rate of live births was 12.9, of stillbirths 10.7, of population growth 2.2 and of infant mortality 15.1. According to the 1991 census, women of childbearing age (in the 15-49 age bracket) accounted for 2,321,590 of the total population of Serbia, or 23.73 per cent.

123. In the Republic of Serbia, there are 189 health-care centres, which provide for the primary health care of women. These institutions provide comprehensive health-care services. The number of organizational units—clinics for women's health care—dropped from 326 in 1994 to 284 in 1996, or 12.8 per cent. Health care is also provided by around 100 private gynaecological clinics (in 1995, of a total of 850 private clinics, 96 were gynaecological).

124. The total number of doctors in primary health care was 572 in 1994, and it was kept at approximately the same level in 1996, with 568 doctors. The number of other types of health-care workers declined from 1,114 in 1994 to 1,028 in 1996, which is a reduction of 7.3 per cent.

125. In 1994, the health-care service for women recorded 2,162,000 visits to doctor's clinics, and in 1996, 2,354,000, which is an increase in usage of 8.8 per cent. In the observed period, the number of control examinations rose by 62.9 per cent while the number of periodic check-ups dropped by 23.5 per cent. The number of visits to the family-planning counselling service rose by 18.7 per cent (1994-1996), which indirectly indicates an increase in the number of women using modern contraceptives.

126. However, in the areas with low birth rates, birth control is chiefly reduced to abortions, the number of which was 40 per 1,000 women in the 15-49 age bracket in the past three years.

127. The number of babies born with professional assistance during delivery in the Republic of Serbia varies from one area to the other: in Vojvodina it amounts to almost 100 per cent, in central Serbia about 98 per cent, while in Kosovo and Metohija it is unfavourable and amounts to 80 per cent.

128. In 1996, in the population of women of childbearing age, a total of 1,030,408 diseases and conditions were registered, which accounted for 6.4 per cent of the total number of diseases and conditions registered in all out-patient wards and services. This ratio has been maintained for several years.

129. In the structure of diagnosed diseases and conditions in the field of health care of women in the territory of the Republic of Serbia over the observed 1994-1996 period, five groups of diseases were the most frequent—diseases of the genital and urinary system; problems in pregnancy, on delivery and during puerperium; infectious and parasitic diseases; neoplastic and endocrine diseases; and diseases related to diet and metabolic and immune system disorders.

130. Data on maternal mortality for the territory of the Republic of Serbia vary a lot; the rate of maternal mortality per 100,000 live births was 10.9 in 1994 and 7.8 in 1996.

131. In the health-care system of the Republic of Montenegro, women and children constitute a priority population category, and the protection and promotion of their health, in particular that related to contraception, pregnancy, delivery and motherhood, are treated as mandatory, along with other permanent comprehensive activities for the protection and promotion of women's health.

132. The protection of women's health in Montenego has been established in such a manner that all the women in the Republic have access to medical assistance, regardless of their financial or marital status, religious or national affiliation, place of residence, etc.

133. In line with the decision on the scope and content of mandatory forms of health care, health care for women with regard to pregnancy, delivery, motherhood and contraception has been prescribed. It covers regular check-ups of pregnant women, including: four medical examinations in the Counselling Service for Women, determination of blood type and Rh-factor; testing of blood for syphilis; testing of blood and urine with every medical examination; and, for women with high-risk pregnancies, medical examination and tests according to their medical indications; delivery in health-care institutions, or professional assistance in home births; treatment of pregnant women who are ill both in health-care institutions and at home; treatment of anaemia in pregnancy with drugs; care and protection of mother and child as well as one medical check-up six weeks after delivery

and one three months after; access to health-care services that are medically indicated during pregnancy and delivery; visits by community service workers to check on a new mother and a baby (one during pregnancy and four after delivery); monitoring of health status with regard to contraception through at least two medical examinations a year in the counselling service; and the provision of contraceptives, as well as dental health care for women during pregnancy and six months after delivery, including two periodic check-ups with systematic treatment of the mouth and teeth during pregnancy and two such check-ups six months after delivery.

134. In Montenegro, health care of women is being provided in out-patient clinics as well as in gynaecological and obstetric wards of seven general hospitals (in Cetinje, Niksic, Pljevlja, Berane, Bar and Kotor) and in the Clinical and Hospital Centre of Montenegro in Podgorica.

135. In all clinics where women's health care is provided, there were a total of 116,474 visits in 1996, out of which 44,677 were first-time medical examinations, 23,417 were control examinations by gynaecologists, 1,407 were periodic check-ups and 39,504 were other types of visits.

136. Health care of women, as a priority, occupies a clear-cut and pronounced place in programmes and plans adopted at the republic level.

137. The Health Care Programme in Montenegro for 1998, developed by the Republican Health Care Fund, has as its basic goals for women's health care regular medical check-ups of pregnant women, including education in the field of health care and treatment of pregnant women who are sick, the provision of professional assistance in every delivery, the reduction of the maternal mortality rate, the provision of family planning and the early detection of malignant diseases of breasts and genital organs, together with adequate treatment of all health disorders in women.

138. In 1998, according to the population estimates for Montenegro, there will be 167,250 women of childbearing age, who will account for 25.8 per cent of the total population.

139. In the course of 1998, the following measures are to be taken with a view to protecting women's health, apart from those mentioned above as mandatory forms of health care: working in the family-planning counselling service, helping young married couples in the period before conception, monitoring in relation to contraception, with at least two medical examinations a year, one of them being a preventive examination for all women over 15 years of age; education in the field of health care organized in dispensaries, counselling services, families and other places; detection and treatment of sterility; education of pregnant women with regard to health care aimed at educating them about proper diet and care and protection of the mouth and teeth; check-ups of women after the age of 35 for early detection of malignant diseases of genital organs and breasts.

140. The previously mentioned measures will also continue to be applied, namely at least four examinations of pregnant women, including diagnosing pregnancy, determining blood type and Rh-factor, tests for syphilis and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), testing blood and urine, lending professional assistance in childbirth, providing drugs and providing transportation for the purpose of giving birth or in case of a disease related to pregnancy and childbirth.

141. The above-mentioned health-care measures will fully cover at least 90 per cent of women, and the result of applying these measures will be a reduction in the rate of diseases of the genital organs and breasts, in the maternal mortality rate, in stillbirths, in the number

of babies born with deformities and in the total rate of morbidity and mortality of women in general.

142. In 1996, the women's health-care service in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia comprised 318 organizational units, which is 25 per cent less than in 1993, when there were 390 organizational units. The total number of health-care workers in those units in 1996 was 1,732, of which 623 were doctors (36 per cent) and 1,109 were other health-care workers (64 per cent). Compared to 1993, the number of doctors increased by 4 per cent. Of the total number of doctors, 531 were specialists, 87 were doctors undergoing specialized training, and 5 were general practitioners. The number of other health-care workers had increased by 2 per cent. The total number of visits to doctors in 1993 was 2,237,000 and in 1996 2,470,000, which is a 10.4 per cent increase. In the 1993-1996 period, the number of first visits to the counselling service for pregnant women increased from 131,000 to 135,000, or by 3 per cent. In the 1993-1996 period the total number of visits to the Family Planning Counselling Service dropped by 6 per cent. The decline in the birth rate persisted in 1996, so the rate of live births in 1996 was 12.9 (16 in 1986, 14.6 in 1991 and 13.6 in 1992). According to data for 1996, 137,683 babies were born, which is 2,821 less than in 1995.

143. Diseases and conditions of pregnant women and mothers that affect the health status and mortality of newborn babies fall into a special category. Thus, from year to year, the percentage of newborns who have died from diseases in the so-called perinatal period is on the rise relative to the total number of infant deaths, from 41.3 per cent in 1990 to 58.8 in 1995. In 1996, among the 10 most frequent diseases, conditions and injuries treated in hospital, pregnancy, childbirth and confinement occupied fourth place, with 101,388 cases, or 11 per cent.

144. The most frequent causes of death among the female population (excluding insufficiently defined conditions) are diseases of the circulatory system (61.1 per cent), neoplasm (14.6 per cent) and diseases of the respiratory system (4.2 per cent).

145. The mortality rate of new mothers per 100,000 live births was 10.3 per cent in 1990, 17.1 per cent in 1993, 13.1 per cent in 1994 and 12.1 per cent in 1995.

146. The impact of the Security Council sanctions on the health of women, in particular over the 1992-1994 period, has been assessed in various reports at the country level, but the most relevant one was presented by health-care institutions dealing with the protection of this population group. The general assessment is that a decline has been recorded in both preventive and curative examinations in primary health care. In addition, the scope of hospitalization has been reduced, hospital stays have been shortened, and the incidence of incomplete diagnoses has increased, along with prolonged post-operative stays.

147. Thus, the Gynaecology and Obstetrics Institute of the Serbian Clinical Centre (the most significant health-care institution in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) has analysed and compared the progress and outcome of pregnancies of hospitalized patients in the course of 1989, 1993 and 1994 and compiled data showing that, compared to the total number of deliveries in the past two years, there were more complications in pregnancy with signs of imminent abortion, premature deliveries and retardation in the growth of fetuses. The Gynaecology and Obstetrics Clinic in Novi Sad reported almost the same results.

148. The Gynaecology Service of the Podgorica Clinical Centre points out that, like those in Belgrade and Novi Sad, owing to the gravity of complications in pregnancy, the share of obstetric surgeries has been increased, the consequence of which was the increase in

deliveries of vitally endangered babies by 28 per cent in 1993 and 1994 relative to 1989. The officially registered number of illegal abortions, which amounts to only 0.09 per cent of all abortions in 1994, has been, however, called into question by the federal government commission for the advancement of the status of women. It has been pointed out that this number must be bigger, because the gray zone of private medical practice is out of the reach of the statistics. The Commission's intention is to pay special attention to this problem.

149. Special concern has been caused by data indicating that cancer protection for women has been particularly inadequate: there are no periodic check-ups aimed at the timely detection of diseases, so that cancer is being detected in an advanced stage. Due to the lack of cytostatic agents, therapy is incomplete and the period of waiting for surgery is rather long. Experts are warning that the length of survival of persons with malignant diseases has evidently been reduced, while the mortality rate of women with malignant diseases of the breast and genital organs has increased. For example, according to data from the territory of the Republic of Serbia, the organs that have been affected the most by terminal malignant diseases in females over a 15-year period (1981-1995) are breast, with an increase from 12.2 to 17.9 per cent, lungs and bronchi, with an increase from 6.2 to 9.8 per cent and cervix, with an increase from 4.1 to 5.8 per cent.

150. In the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the problem of AIDS is especially acute, owing to the lack of diagnostic tests and means of preventing the spread of the disease. According to relevant data, the epidemiological situation regarding the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/AIDS in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is considered to be unfavourable. The prognosis with regard to the further spread of the disease is also unfavourable, bearing in mind the present situation in the country (the socio-economic one, huge migrations, lack of condoms and the increase in the number of drug addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes, etc.). In spite of the fact that there is an AIDS counselling service in Belgrade, where AIDS tests can be carried out at one's own initiative and that a hot line is in operation through which all information about the disease can be obtained, there is no systematic health education of risk groups, first and foremost the young, nor any widespread awareness among the population of this disease. Since 1985, when the first cases were registered, till 30 September 1997, a total of 671 diseased persons had been registered in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (51 new cases in 1997), out of which 465 had died (40 in 1997). Intravenous drug addicts account for the majority of the diseased (335), followed by those infected through heterosexual contact (112) and the transmission group of homosexuals and bisexuals (91). Also registered are 6 cases of children suffering from AIDS, who contracted the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) from their mothers. The largest number of AIDS patients is in the territory of Belgrade—474 cases (70.64 per cent of the total). Women account for around 25 per cent of the total number of cases.

151. Aware of the danger posed by HIV/AIDS, as well as of the means and rate of transmission, in 1995 we adopted, at the national level, the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Programme, the implementation of which should ensure more effective surveillance and prevention of this disease.

152. In Kosovo and Metohija, the unfavourable health status of the population, particularly of infants, children and women of childbearing age, despite constant efforts by the State to improve the situation, is directly dependent on complex socio-economic living conditions, demographic trends, habits, religious customs, parents' education—education of mothers, first and foremost, as well as on how much health-care services are used and how accessible they are. Positive developments in health care and the promotion of women's and children's health in Kosovo and Metohija, typical of the period

before the sanctions, not only were interrupted by the imposition of the sanctions, but that also led to the deterioration of both health care and the health status of these population groups. Additional factors contributing to the deterioration in the health care of women in this region are the parallel, in most cases illegal, system of health care intended for the Albanian minority and the boycott of official, i.e., State-run health-care institutions for political reasons, the already mentioned high rate of population growth and the low level of health culture.

153. The high rate of infant mortality (though steadily decreasing—from 33.6 in 1991 to 23.6 in 1995) and the mortality rate for children under five (also decreasing—from 38.7 in 1991 to 27.7 in 1995) should be connected to the high percentage of illiterate females over 10 years of age (from 15 to 24 per cent) in all five regions of this province, given the generally accepted position that the mortality of children of this age is directly dependent on the literacy of mothers. More than one third of mothers of the 11.8 per cent of deceased infants who had not been treated (in 1994) had never completed their primary education.

154. At the same time, although it is steadily decreasing, the birth rate in this province is high, amounting to 21.4 per cent in 1996. Thus, unlike in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, where the number of newborn babies dropped by 2,860 in 1996 compared to 1995 (in Vojvodina by 891, in central Serbia by 2,847), in Kosovo and Metohija 1,928 more babies were born in 1996 than in 1995.

155. The percentage of babies born without professional assistance ranged from 28.1 in 1991 to 27.1 in 1994 and 23 in 1995. Other indicators of how much health-care services are used are also unfavourable: the indicator of visits to the Women's Health Care Service in 1996, which is 0.1 per cent, shows that only every tenth woman entered the health-care system (at the national level, it was every other woman). According to the indicator regarding the number of first visits to the Counselling Service for Pregnant Women, only 48 per cent of women had monitored their pregnancy (96 per cent at the country level), while only 1 per cent of women of childbearing age had made use of the family-planning services. It should be mentioned that in 1990, those figures were somewhat more favourable.

156. Bearing that in mind, at the suggestion of an expert team comprising representatives of UNICEF, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia, the Serbian Institute for Mother and Childcare and the Public Health Institute, a joint project has been adopted and is being implemented with the aim of promoting primary health care in all health institutions in Kosovo and Metohija. The greatest success in the implementation of this project has been achieved in the field of mandatory immunization of children against childhood diseases, especially against poliomyelitis. In spite of the fact that the Albanian population is using more than 80 per cent of the staffing and hospital capacities in the State health-care sector in Kosovo and Metohija, and that in those health-care institutions Albanians make up half of the personnel, there are still incidents of using services within an illegal and improvised health-care system, as well as the practice of not recording and not reporting health and statistical data and information important for evaluating health care and the health status of the total population in Kosovo and Metohija. Additional factors contributing to the deterioration of health care for women in this region are the parallel, and in most cases illegal, system of health care intended for the Albanian minority, a very high rate of population growth, a low level of health and other culture and the boycott of official health-care institutions by members of the Albanian minority for political reasons.

Article 13

157. On the basis of constitutionally proclaimed equality of citizens, women have all the rights men have regarding family-related benefits. Women have the right to be granted banking, housing and other loans under exactly the same conditions as men.

158. There are no obstacles, whether formal or practical ones, to women's participation in sports or cultural activities.

Article 14

159. Apart from the already mentioned negative practices regarding health education and the health status of women in rural areas (extraordinary report), it should be stressed that the accessibility of the health service has significantly decreased over the period covered by the report. A large number of health stations have been shut down, making the provision of health-care services and the protection of children and pregnant women in rural areas, far away from large health centres, more difficult.

160. In such conditions, the support and assistance of UNICEF has been very significant, since it organized, in cooperation with the competent State organs in charge of health care, mobile counselling services for mothers for the purposes of affirming the value of breastfeeding and reducing the incidence of diarrhoeal diseases, respiratory infections, etc.

Part four

Article 15

161. Women are fully equal to men with regard to legal and business ability.

Article 16

162. The majority of children in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are born in wedlock. The average household in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia numbers 3.62 members (according to the 1991 census), but there are considerable differences among regions. In Vojvodina, the size of the family is 2.94 members, in central Serbia, 3.37, in Montenegro, it is slightly above the country average, amounting to 3.77, while in Kosovo and Metohija it is well above the average, amounting to 6.54.

163. For the country as a whole, the number of marriages per 1,000 inhabitants amounted to 5.4 in 1996, dropping in comparison with 1990, when it was 6.2. The smallest decrease was registered in Montenegro, where it dropped from 6.0 to 5.9. The registered drop in the number of marriages has apparently been reflected in a decrease in the birth rate. The positive fact is that over the same period (1990-1996), the rate of divorce (the number of divorces per 1,000 registered marriages) also dropped, from 165.3 in 1990 to 139.2 in 1996 in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a whole.

164. Bearing in mind facts presented in the present report, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reiterates its resolve to continue the work, in accordance with the provisions and commitments taken under the Convention and with the country's adopted policy, not only on the maintenance of the achieved level of women's rights in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but also on the permanent promotion thereof.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, 48th Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/48/38), para. 2.

[2] Ibid., *Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/49/38), paras. 758-776.

[3] According to the report of the European Union Opinion Poll Commission, of the 200,000 Serbs who lived in the Knin Krajina prior to the operation of the Croatian army, only 5,000 have remained.

[4] This can be illustrated by the change in the gross national product, which dropped from US$ 25 billion in 1991 to $18 billion in 1992.

[5] The text by Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic, "Violence against Women in Conditions of War and Economic Crisis", published in the magazine *Socioloski pregled*, No. 3/94. The same author, together with a group of researchers from the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research in Belgrade, published a book entitled *Women, Violence and the War*, the aim of which is to point to horrible manipulation, with raped women who, as victims of war, are classified as collateral (indirect) war damage.

[6] The data pertain to the State sector of health care, as at 31 December 1994.

[7] The official statistics take into consideration only women workers in the social sector.

[8] The extraordinary report submitted in 1993 contained data on the number of women employed in the social sector as at 31 December 1988, and the present report contains data as at 31 December 1993.